

CATHOLIC THEATRE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
of
NATIONAL CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

Vol. XIV

MAY, 1956

No. 8

President
Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M.

Vice-President
Rev. Robert Johnston, S.J.

Secretarial Office: 801 Main Street, Davenport, Iowa
Editorial Office: College of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio

When The Teacher Directs

by BROTHER DUNSTAN, C.S.C.

The Narrator at the beginning of the picture *Song of Bernadette* said: "To those who believe no explanation is necessary, and to those who do not believe no explanation is possible." This is something of the position of the teacher who is at the same time a director of dramatics. To explain the importance of what he is trying to do seems unnecessary to those in the field, and to those who are not in the field the explanation seems unbelievable. A craftier and more optimistic person would certainly have struck a gayer cord to entice his reader, but even a drama teacher is allowed a mood. In this age of science the mathematics teacher needs to tell no one what he is teaching or why. The history teacher should no longer have to battle for reference books and maps; the history course is an accepted necessity. And the athletic director has only to shout, "A sound mind in a sound body" and all of the required equipment necessary for a ball-centered educational system is placed graciously at his disposal. When the teacher of dramatics starts to work, he must explain himself and his need in detail; and, even then, he is not so sure he will be heard. But for those of us who are involved in the re-birth of an art which goes back to the "glory that was Greece and the grandure that was Rome," there is still a need to explain what we are attempting to teach. Even more unfathomable is the fact that the drama teacher in Catholic schools must point out that there is nothing new or revolutionary in the desire to build up an interest and an esteem for an art which found its renaissance in the sanctuary of our churches, and whose best and most noble plays found their inspiration in the hearts of men who knew that God existed and that man was a creature composed of body and soul. Despite the fact that much of our modern drama is dedicated to the proposition that nothing matters but matter and that morality is nothing but instances of psychopathic tendencies, we must still prove that there is need for developing Christian

drama. We know that Americans are finding more time for leisure, that theatres and television are top-most on the entertainment list; and, yet, we are having a difficult time explaining that our educational system must help supply Christian playwrights, actors, artists, and technicians.

This article proposes to show only some of the facets of the teacher-director's work. It is a way of saying here are some of the things which the drama teacher hopes to accomplish with his students, here are some of the things which we hold to be of great value in the education of students. We imply, of course, that since this is the job we are trying to do, time, facilities, and equipment should be allowed. We hope that those who do not believe will understand our efforts a little better, and those who do believe will profit by refreshing their memories on the subject matter of the teacher-director.

The Teacher and his Attitude

The Christian teacher who directs plays must first of all be considered an artist, not necessarily a great artist, but an artist nevertheless. It is in this role that he must think and act until the final curtain comes down on the last performance. From the moment he has selected his cast and has started rehearsals, he must also think and act his essential role of the teacher. If the final production is to be successful, and if the members of the cast are to go away from the production with permanent ideas and attitudes, then the teacher must be a knowing person with a will and determination to teach for lasting results.

The teacher's attitude toward his cast is every bit as important as the attitude of the cast toward the teacher. The teacher who does not know his limitations and is not willing to admit them is a fool, and will be discovered for such before the production is over. No teacher has ever lost

(Continued on page eight)

A CATHOLIC COLLEGIATE FRATERNITY

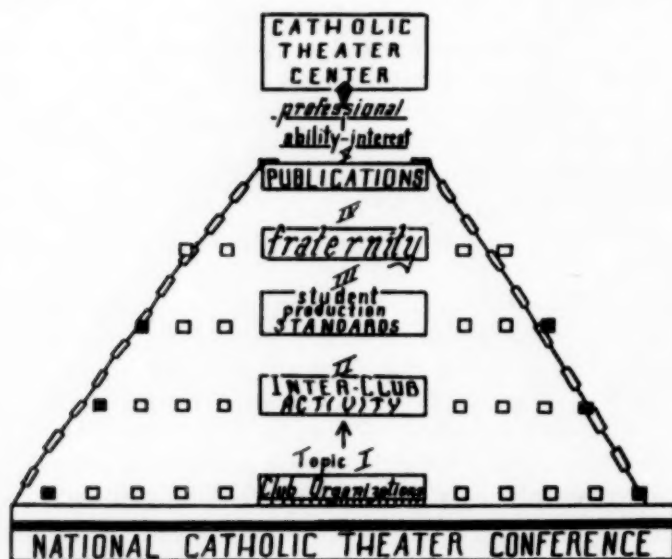
(Report on Mid-West College Student Discussions—by Rev. John F. Boyle, S.J., St. Louis University)

EDITOR'S NOTE

At the Convention of N.C.T.C. held at Notre Dame University in 1955, college directors discussed the need for greater activity on the college level in N.C.T.C. At this meeting it was suggested that a meeting of at least mid-western college students be held in the course of the year to launch plans for such activity. The outgrowth of this suggestion was a meeting of mid-western college students in Omaha Nebraska, March 10, planned by Dr. Earl C. Bach, national board member in charge of college activity, and Rev. R. A. Johnson, S.J., Vice President of N.C.T.C. We are grateful to Rev. John Boyle, S.J., for preparing a summary of the results of this meeting for inclusion in Catholic Theatre.

On March 10, 1956, at the College of St. Mary, Omaha, Nebraska, one hundred and thirty-two student representatives of twenty mid-western colleges (fourteen from the West Central Region of N.C.T.C. and six from nearby regions), met for the purpose of discussing the possibility of a more complete development of college theatre activity within the framework of the National Catholic Theatre Conference.

The college student representatives formed their discussions around one basic, long-range question: how can college drama organizations, through their activities in N.C.T.C., lay the groundwork for the future development of Catholic Community Theatre Centers throughout the country? To discuss this question, the representatives divided themselves into six Planning Committee groups, each of which was to consider a topic related to the question. The six topics chosen for discussion are pictured in the diagram below. The small squares represent college drama units which carry the potential for specific activities. The chain indicates the linking factor of written communication in securing unity of interest and effort.



To reach the objective of Catholic Community Theatre Centers, visualized as the peak of the pyramid above, and putting the exclusive focus on the colleges, the delegates came to these conclusions.

CONCLUSION I: Drama Club Organizations

Under the guidance of N.C.T.C., each College Drama Club be organized and operated to meet most effectively the needs of its student members and to best benefit the drama program in its college. The drama club as such to be considered as the initial stage of a long-range program of development. To achieve this it was recommended:

- (1) that the first requisite for membership in a drama club should be student membership in N.C.T.C.
- (2) that students accepted for membership in a drama club should make an energetic contribution toward establishing the club as an effective and active organization on campus.
- (3) that membership in a college drama club be extended not only to speech and drama majors but to all interested and qualified students in the school.
- (4) that activity in a given drama club be planned to give student experience in both the area of his special interest or talent and all other phases of theatre. To promote the latter it was recommended that students should rotate in all capacities, both off stage and on.
- (5) that acceptance into a National Drama Fraternity be considered both as a medium of reward for work well done and as a goal to be sought by each member.

CONCLUSION II—Inter-Club Activity

That there should be communication and cooperation between the various college drama clubs as far as distance and circumstances will permit. This would provide an opportunity for sharing of experiences and ideas and would develop the basis for further cooperative work after finishing college. This inter-club cooperation would be attained through conventions on the national and regional level and through drama festivals, clinics, corporate productions, etc., on a local level.

CONCLUSION III—Student Production Experiments

That apart from major productions supervised and directed by faculty members, the students themselves be given opportunity in all phases of production through programs of experimental, student-directed productions.

(Continued on page sixteen)

From the President's Desk . . .

A year ago at this time all members received a booklet containing a directory and the constitution of the National Catholic Theatre Conference. This year a stencilled list containing the names of all new members who have joined the conference since April 15, 1955, will be mailed to members who already have a 1955 booklet. New members will receive the 1955 directory as well as the stencilled list. A new printed directory will be issued before the National Convention in June, 1957.

If those who hasten off to summer school betimes will send the editor or the secretarial office a card, we will be happy to send your June and mid-summer issues of CATHOLIC THEATRE to your summer abode.

The Executive Board, the Regional Chairmen, and the State and Area Representatives will meet in Chicago, June 16. If any members have suggestions, problems, new ideas they wish discussed, please write about them and submit them to the secretarial office.

And remember! We would like to have your best pictures and your articles for the annual! The deadline is June 1.

May Mary, Our Lady of May, bless you for your fine cooperation!

Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M.

Players Incorporated

announces its

FOURTH SEASON AT

OLNEY THEATRE

Olney, Maryland
Professional Equity Company

and its

SIXTH SEASON AT

ST. MICHAEL'S PLAYHOUSE

Winooski Park, Vermont

Apprentices accepted at St. Michael's Playhouse.
Experience in all phases of production.

Write:

MR. ROBERT B. MOORE, *President*,
Players Incorporated
Speech and Drama Department,
Catholic University of America,
Washington 17, D. C.

Another Active Guild

by BETTY J. TAYLOR, *Secretary*

The Theatre Guild of St. Thomas More Parish, Decatur, Georgia, is perhaps the only such Catholic dramatic group in the Diocese. The origin of this society traces back to the winter of 1953 when a group of industrious, enthusiastic members of the Home and School Association of St. Thomas More Parish joined under the name of the THESPIANS to produce a play for the benefit of the school. The THESPIANS were literally busy until curtain time on the evening of April 24, 1953, when they presented George M. Cohan's SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE in the Decatur High School auditorium. As the last nail went into the set, the curtain rose on a group of housewives, business men and professional men who found themselves transposed into the make-believe world of actors. One member had acted in summer stock, another had studied drama both in College and under professional coaches, and a few had acted in college or high school plays. But for many, SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE was the first opportunity they had to wear grease paint, to stand before the footlights, and to have the joy of creating an experience on the stage.

With the success of their first play, the THESPIANS began to talk of producing another play, and as they talked they realized the necessity of banding together in a group. So, from the THESPIANS, the THEATRE GUILD was formed to produce plays for Religious, educational, civic and benevolent purposes. A constitution was drawn up, officers were elected, and on February 27, 1954, ROOM SERVICE by John Murray and Allen Goretz was presented in the Decatur High School auditorium.

With the knowledge and skill that members had acquired from producing the first play, they were better able to approach the jobs of building and painting scenery, locating and assembling properties, handling stage effects, contacting advertisers, promoting publicity, and selling tickets. All those necessary unglamorous jobs that precede the production of every play were capably handled. The actors, too, had the feel of working with each other and grasped what the director meant by stage left, stage right, up stage, down stage, feeding the cross, and "business." The success of ROOM SERVICE meant the coming of age of the Theatre Guild.

On October 2, 1953, in Presser Hall, Agnes Scott College, the Theatre Guild members delighted an audience of five hundred with the ever-enjoyable YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU. This Moss Hart-George S. Kaufmann comedy required a cast of seventeen, many properties, and several important stage and sound effects. All members of the Guild were involved in some phase of the production and some were busily working on as many as three phases. This brought forth the need for a larger membership.

(Continued on page fifteen)

Cross Country Circuit

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

The Cap and Bells of St. Joseph's College, Philadelphia, presented SUMMER IN MY HEART, an original play with music by George Nider and Edward Metz on April 18 through April 22.

* * *

Benedictine Heights College, Tulsa, Oklahoma, has been busy with its Drama Workshop. On May 11 and 12 they presented Moliere's THE IMAGINARY INVALID which has been translated and adapted by William Callahan. Drama Workshop acts in collaboration with anyone interested from the Tulsa area. In this production, three roles were taken by persons outside the college. The Workshop will run through the summer months. A sort of College-Community Theatre setup directed by Sister Mary Immaculata, O.S.B.

* * *

Barry College, Miami, Florida, presented Christopher Fry's BOY WITH A CART in their new outdoor theatre on April 28th. The occasion was a N.C.T.C. meeting for surrounding Catholic High Schools.

Last fall Barry College presented BRIGADOON and produced Sister Denise's ORATORIO at Christmas. For the dedication of their new auditorium they chose to present TIDINGS BROUGHT TO MARY.

* * *

Spring workshop productions at St. Louis University included the following: A SLEEP OF PRISONERS by Christopher Fry, THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE by Wm. Saroyan, the Assassination scene from JULIUS CAESAR by G. B. Shaw and selected scenes from THE FATHER by August Strindberg. The Spring Workshop productions were student directed and produced. Arthur Miller's THE CRUCIBLE was the March production of the St. Louis University Theatre under the direction of Mr. Alan B. Hanson.

* * *

Rosary College Players, River Forest, Illinois, presented FIRST LADY by Katherine Dayton and George S. Kaufman on April 20 and 22.

* * *

Nazareth College of Rochester presented an outdoor showing of a scene from THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST this past month. In May, the annual student-directed SRO (Standing Room Only) production will feature a night of three one acts—Wilder's THE HAPPY JOURNEY, NOBLESSE OBLIGE, and FOLLOW THE HEART, a student-written original. Drama director at Nazareth is Alan A. Stambusky, Jr.

* * *

The Riff Guild of St. John Fisher College, Rochester, produced Mary Chase's comedy, HARVEY on April 20 and 21. Lloyd Hubbard directed.

HIGH SCHOOL

The Belle Masque drama club of Cascia Hall, Tulsa, Oklahoma, presented DARK VICTORY on April 29-30 and May 1. The production directed by Reverend A. J. La Fleur, O.S.A. was given in Arena style.

* * *

Three one-acts, ANTIC SPRING, NOW THAT IT'S APRIL and DEAR DEPARTED were presented at Marquette High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, in late April. Sister M. Dolores, O.S.B. directed.

* * *

Monte Cassino High School, Tulsa, also present three one-act plays. A cutting from THE RIVALS, an original, TRY-OUTS, and BE A LITTLE CUCKOO were directed by Sister Mary Immaculata, O.S.B., on May 3rd.

* * *

On April 27 and 29, the senior class of Saint Joseph Academy, Green Bay, Wisconsin, presented THESE GOLDEN DAYS under the direction of Sister Mary Edward. The play by Sophie Gage is for an all-girl cast.

* * *

St. Margaret's Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota presented DADDY LONG-LEGS by Jean Webster on April 29 and 30. Sister Mary Ruth directed.

* * *

The Mercian Players of Mercy High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, have been a very busy group. Their one-act play entitled WHITE IRIS won an A rating at the state Forensic Contest held in Madison, Wisconsin. This was achieved only after they received A's in both the district contest and then at the regional meet in Whitewater, Wisconsin. The play was under the direction of Mrs. Wozny, the speech teacher.

* * *

The Gay Pretenders supported by the Glee Club of the Academy of the Holy Angels, Fort Lee, New Jersey presented Victor Herbert's BABES IN TOYLAND on April 28 and May 6. The operetta was under the direction of Sister Genevieve Marie, S.S.N.D., and Sister Mary Paul, S.S.N.D.

* * *

The Masque and Gavel Players of Mother of Mercy High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, collaborated with the Thespians of Elder High School in the production of CREEPING SHADOWS, a three-act mystery comedy, presented on April 28, 29 and 30. Sister Mary Carlos, R.S.M., and Reverend Robert Putnick co-directed.

* * *

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, Indiana, announces the year-end play. They will present WAY OF HEAVEN by Sister Mary Roger, S.P. The play commemorates the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Mother Theodore, the foundress of the Sisters of Providence in America. The production was scheduled for May 12.

CINEMOID COLOR MEDIUMS
HEAT RESISTANT...WATERPROOF...COLOR FILTERS
Now Stocked in ALL Colors.

Pure, uniform colors, in an almost limitless variety of tints and hues, both primary and secondary, in all spectrum areas.

Far more durable than any other color medium. Heat and moisture resistant qualities make these filters virtually indestructible. No need to continually "gel-up" during the run of a show . . . *once is enough*. Equally effective for use on high or low wattage lamps; indoors or outdoors —

Furnished in 20 x 24 inch sheets. Can easily be cut to any shape or size.

Educational Theater Division
KLIEGL BROS
 UNIVERSAL ELECTRIC STAGE LIGHTING CO., INC.
Lighting
 321 WEST 50TH STREET NEW YORK 19, N.Y.

Send for sample of Cinemoid material and listing of colors; also chart of Spectral Transmittance curves showing component spectrum wave length measurements and percentage of light transmittance. Ask for Bulletin No. 58.

Originators and Manufacturers of Klieglights

Broadway In Review

by MRS. CHRISTOPHER WYATT

MY FAIR LADY—Yes, its just delightful as currently reported—the lyrics are witty, the music engaging, the sets by Oliver Smith fine background for Cecil Beaton's fabulous costumes. Rex Harrison is in top form, so is Julie Andrews and so are Stanley Holloway as Mr. Doolittle and Cathleen Nesbit as Mrs. Higgins. Get the record. At the **MARK HELLINGER**.

MR. JOHNSON—He is an African Sakini, but it being Africa, life is far more grim than in Okinawa and poor light-hearted, light fingered Mr. Johnson has a tragic ending. Splendidly played by Earle Hyman—once Athello—with vivid scenes of Nigeria. At the **MARTIN BECK**.

THE ADMIRABLE BASHVILLE & THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS—Very amusing and animated performances of two seldom seen Shavian fancies. Well worth a trip to Greenwich Village and the **CHERRY LANE THEATRE**.

MR. WONDERFUL—What is really a vaudeville act

is stretched interminably into a musical which introduces Sammy Davis, Jr., famous in night clubs, with his father and uncle. Small and lithe with a Hapsburg jaw, Sammy, Jr., has as much repose as a high tension wire. His tap dancing is mercurial and the rest of the show very flat. At **BROADWAY**. **ROMEO & JULIET**—A streamlined production of the Shakespearewrights which holds High School audiences spellbound. The Friar is made the centre of the action and Romeo steals the stage from Juliet, who is really very young. At **JAN HUS AUDITORIUM**. **A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY**—Revival of Turgenev's comedy in which Uta Hagen does not measure up to the memory of Nazimova. Alexander Scourby is excellent as Rakitin (Turgenev himself). Luther Adler enjoys himself hugely as the Doctor and Michael Strong is equally good as the young tutor who causes such heart burning among the ladies. Michael Redgrave has directed a very pleasing production. At **PHOENIX**. **AFFAIR OF HONOR**—Presented by the Theatre Guild with Dennis King, it is something to avoid. **ETHEL BARRYMORE**.

College Calibre

Viterbo College, La Crosse, Wisconsin:

Though not yet a year old, the Viterbo College Drama Department reports a year of enrichment for students and audiences alike. In the fall the technique of acting class entertained with a series of one acts: *LADIES OF THE MOP*, a cutting from *AS YOU LIKE IT*, and *IN THE LAND OF FANTASY* (Book Week Pageant).

At Christmas time the Viterbo College Players were organized and produced Henri Gheon's *CHRISTMAS ON THE VILLAGE SQUARE*. After putting out the fires on the "Village Square" they went into rehearsal for Oscar Wilde's *IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST* with production on April 14, 15 and 16.

During the Fine Arts Week (May 2-9) the Viterbo Players presented Christopher Fry's *PHOENIX TOO FREQUENT* and the verse choir did a repertoire of lyric and dramatic presentations.

Director of speech and drama is Sister Marie Leon.

* * *

College of St. Teresa, Kansas City, Missouri:

The Speech and Drama Department of the College of St. Teresa presented George Bernard Shaw's satire, *ARMS AND THE MAN*, on April 14 and 15. Drama majors took the women's roles while the men's roles were played by men from the community. Drama Club members worked on all phases of the production from the painting of the fragmentary sets, designed by Miss Jari Havlena, art instructor at the College, to promotion work.

On March 18, two original once-act plays were presented. They were student produced. One play was a modern farce entitled, *TRAPPED*, and the other, a more serious selection, *TOO DEEP FOR TEARS*, was experimental in structure.

* * *

Saint Mary College, Xavier, Kansas:

Representatives of Saint Mary College, Xavier, Kansas, having washed the black from their hair after the final performance of the Chinese classic, *LUTE SONG* on March 4, attended the NCTC Convention in Omaha. After returning enthusiastically from the "mid-west roundup" rehearsals began immediately for the modern dance drama interpretations of Francis Thompson's *HOUD OF HEAVEN* and Gerard Manley Hopkins' *LADY, COMPARED TO THE AIR WE BREATHE*, which were presented April 7 and 8. The children's theatre production of *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* on April 13 and 14 concluded the drama program for the year.

Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa:

Clarke recently presented an experimental production entitled *THIRTEEN O'CLOCK*. It was comprised of four dramatic readings taken from four short stories by Stephen Vincent Benet. The first, *THE KING OF THE CATS* was a wierd tale of chilling fantasy. *JOHNNY PIE AND THE FOOL KILLER* was an early American story. *O'HALLORAN'S LUCK* lent a St. Patrick's Day touch to the program and *INTO EGYPT* was a religious allegory which added the Lenten Spirit.

This full stage production was a synchronization of voice, light and sound. The backdrop, which was the only setting, was a stylized skyline of a village, the center being the town clock striking *THIRTEEN O'CLOCK*. The stage was arranged in various levels.

Sound was used for passage of time, change of mood, pace, and characterization.

The lighting set the scene, changed the shape and color, spotted the readers and worked with the sound to create desired effects. Special techniques were made possible through the lighting, such as creating illusions and shadows behind the scrim. The stories used several narrators, had a great deal of dialogue and much opportunity for sound and lighting devices.

The production was directed by Mr. George Herman.

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH, Thornton Wilder's play, was the next Clarke College production. It was presented on May 5 and 6 in Arena style. The play has such an element of universal appeal, that it can be more satisfactorily expressed if done in "the round." An expressionistic setting for the production was used.

Sister Mary Xavier, B.V.M., directed.

* * *

Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio:

The Xavier University Masque presented a new play, *THE SIEGE OF PAMPELUNA*, by James Qualin in its South Hall campus theatre, May 11, 12, 13. The premier production honors the University's 125th Anniversary and the 400th Jesuit Ignatian Year. As a romantic drama, the three-act play portrays the military fall of the Jassu y Xavier family and the spiritual rise of its youngest son, Francisco, with Don Inigo de Loyola. The scenes take place in an old Basque castle of Navarre and in St. Barbe College, University of Paris, early sixteenth century. There is a cast of thirty—22 males, 8 females—and a single interior set. *SIEGE OF PAMPELUNA* was directed by John G. Maupin, faculty moderator and Speech Arts head, and produced by the Masque staff and crew members.

Marymount College, Salina, Kansas:

The Marymount Players presented *LADIES IN RETIREMENT* on April 12 and 13. This is a thriller in the best sense of the word. The universal needs and struggles of the characters aroused sympathy and suspense in the audience. The setting is England about 1885, and costumes were of that period.

* * *

Loretto Heights College, Denver, Colorado:

The Loretto Heights College Genesians of Denver presented a Reader's Theatre version of the great tragedy, *OEDIPUS REX*, on March 15. The ninth annual all school musical production, Rodger's and Hammerstein's *CAROUSEL*, was presented on April 19, 20 and 21. The musical was directed by Dr. Earl C. Bach. Student directed productions presented during April and May included *THE FATHER* by Strindberg, *A DOLL'S HOUSE* by Ibsen, *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO* by Beaumarchais, *EVERYMAN* (in French), *THE MISER* by Moliere, and *THE RIVALS*, by Sheridan.

* * *

Barat College of the Sacred Heart, Lake Forest, Illinois:

The Barat Players produced Mary Chase's delightful fantasy-comedy, *MRS. McTHING*, on May 18 and 19 under the direction of Mr. James Dexter. *ORCHESIS*, the honor society for the dance, gave a spring recital featuring interpretive dances with choreography done by the students themselves under the direction of Miss Patricia Pugh. Miss Catherine Geary's Oral Interpretation group also gave a spring recital.

* * *

College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minnesota:

The Teresan Players, with the aid of the Burbage Players of St. Mary's College, presented *THE MALE ANIMAL* in the College Auditorium on the 9, 10 and 11 of March. The production was a tremendous success and now the students are looking forward to a student produced and directed variety show called *MY BEST IS BROADWAY!* It will contain a number of comedy, song and dance, and dramatic skits written by Teresans.

NIA

**NORTHWESTERN
THEATRE
ASSOCIATES**

*A CENTRALIZED SOURCE OF SUPPLY
FOR THE NON-PROFESSIONAL THEATRE*

SPOTLIGHTS
LAMP BULBS
GELATINE

GREASE PAINT
CREPE HAIR
SPIRIT GUM

SCENE PAINT
CANVAS-MUSLIN
STAGE BRACES

1000 Foster St.

Evanston, Ill.

GR. 5-5351

St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri:

May 4, 5, and 6 were the dates for the St. Louis University Theatre's production of *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*. Under the direction of Dr. C. B. Gilford, the comedy was produced as a play within a play in a manner to give both the actors and audience a maximum amount of fun. The auditorium of the theatre was outfitted to appear much like the town square of a medieval English village. Into this "square" came a ragged touring company of Elizabethan actors whose preliminary banter with the townsmen (and with the theatre audience) formed the prologue, the lines of which have been gathered from other Shakespearean plays. In the course of the prologue, the actors and townsmen chose *THE SHREW* as the play to be performed from the repertory and in true Elizabethan fashion, with simple stage effects, a healthy appetite for horseplay, and actors mingling with the actual theatre audience. Thus the entire theatre became part of "the stage" and the paying audience became a part of the play—a new experience for theatre audiences in this age of box settings and restrained audience response.

Catholic Theatre is good theatre, great art. For art to be truly great it must be moral, according to right reason. Upon inspection we usually find structural flaws in an art object wherein there is also a moral flaw. So, I think we could be safe in saying that truly great theatre is Catholic Theatre.

—RITA MCGRANN, College of St. Teresa
Kansas City, Missouri

ORDER CONFERENCE MEDALS NOW

Sterling silver — \$1.50

Solid gold — \$15.00

Double gold-filled — \$2.50

Write to

ANNA HELEN REUTER, 3800 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago 13, Illinois

WHEN THE TEACHER DIRECTS

(Continued from page one)

dignity or self-respect by admitting that he does not know everything. If he is lacking in modesty, he might easily become a laughing stock. If he fails to be sympathetic, he stands a good chance of losing the confidence and cooperation of his cast and crew. If he is lacking in tolerance he will soon find himself out on a limb, if not doing a role himself on the opening night. Tough sergeants have a place in the army; they do not have a place in the theatre. The good director will sometimes find himself taking direction; he will discover among the members of his cast people who have good ideas, fine explanations which shed new light on a character or situation; he will find himself not only presenting his own ideas but also channeling the ideas of the various members of the cast from one to the other.

It is most important that the director teach by means of explanation. You can not convince an actor of what is wrong with his performance by telling him WHAT is wrong; he must be told WHY he is wrong and WHY he should act or react differently. The actor who has learned WHY as well as WHAT is being taught to act according to principles—principles which he might later well apply to himself off stage. To assume that the actor will not understand *why* is to belittle the intelligence of the members of your cast. To refuse an explanation on the basis of time is to defeat the purpose of teaching. Even an "artistic why" for which there seems to be no explanation can be explained, if the director will only stop to analyze what on the surface seems to be an "artistic intuition."

No one would be so foolish as to propose that the rehearsal period be turned into a nursery time where all the why's are answered. The "teacher-sense" will tell the director when questions are sincere and necessary. It will also tell him when he has met with an actor who is sincerely interested in improving his talent, and who is intent upon finding out all the details of the production that he might later put them to use.

The teacher-director will believe and understand that his cast wants to learn, and the teacher in him will respond willingly to their urge.

The Subject Matter

The importance of solving problems by analysis is a thing which every teacher recognizes; it is essential in the education process. The members of a cast will be confronted with the analysis of the play. No doubt, the surface meaning and implications will be caught with a single reading, but the deeper meanings and implications will only evolve after hours of study and discussion. Experiences about which the actors may know little will have to be discussed and the various facets, actions, and reactions to these experiences will have to be understood. This, in itself, frequently means a *study* of human nature with all of its com-

plicated drives and impulses. When a playwright sets to work he has very definite ideas concerning the kind of people he creates. These people have specific and concrete personalities; they are realities in the mind of the author. The actor, with the aid of the director, must delve and probe until he has come to an understanding of the author's idea of the character. Again, the actor is making a *study* of character, and the director through his own store of experiences, is enlightening the student in the work of this understanding.

Every piece of art has a tone, a color, a touch or style which gives the object of art a oneness, a completeness, a sameness even where there is a difference. If the teacher can help the student to see this in a single play, can point out how the mood and rhythm of each act and scene bears the same brush stroke, he has taught the student a fundamental principle of art and nature.

To know the historical background for a given play will involve the study of history, a study that is not vague and unreal, but which of necessity must become a reality. Hence, he will come to know the costumes of a period, the manners of a period, and even something of the philosophical outlook and attitudes of a period in history.

Essential to the success of the play will be the understanding of an actor and his role in relationship to the other characters in the play. This will call for an explanation of personality agreement and conflict and the basis for the same. Frequently, it will be through the efforts of the drama teacher that the young student will get his first taste of some of the problems of psychology.

"Drama Forms"

Over a period of time in dealing with different plays, the teacher-director will find ample opportunity for explaining comedy and the essence of comedy which is to be found in incongruity. The student who makes study of the fear and pity which are the dominant characteristics of tragedy will learn to appreciate the tragedies which are to be found in everyday living. He will also learn to distinguish between weakness betrayed by weakness and strength undone by a tragic flaw. The teacher will be his guide in this matter. Together with tragedy and comedy, the actor will have to learn the various types and principal style of plays.

Before the teacher-director can explain the essentials of stage business and stage movement, he may have to work himself to the point of near exhaustion by teaching the student how to walk across the stage, how to relax his hands and arms in order that he might use them as he chooses, when he chooses. He will no doubt have to teach the young actor how to turn around on the stage, how to plant his feet, and how to "possess" the stage when he walks on. After he has covered these items he can, by means of careful and intelligent experiment and discussion, explain such things as the necessity for balance. He will show his actors

(Continued on page thirteen)

THE ABC OF PLAYCRAFT

by ALICE GERSTENBERG

Editor's Note: This is the fourth installment of Miss Gerstenberg's article, THE ABC OF PLAYCRAFT.

O

O stands for ORDER.

Are you satisfied with your arrangement into acts?

Or have you been mentally lazy and slid your plot into a series of scenes borrowing from the movies instead of disciplining your mind into the dramatic form?

There is no set dramatic order in the sense that one should have three or five sets, nor is one prevented from having any number of successive scenes, every generation has some new fashion in a superficial way, but the fundamental demand is that the action be dramatic and be presented in its most dramatic form. Loosely knit scenes lack the intensity of drama where the playwright has done his utmost to focus the limitations of the stage (which frequently become only great aids in the stimulation of ingenuity).

Experimenters in production, architects, directors, are trying to lift the limitations from the stage by building new types of theatres, by perfecting mechanical devices, all very stretching to the imagination of a playwright, but fundamentally do not rely on any material aid in playmaking unless you really must. Let the directors have their fun interpreting your play. If they want to give you marvelous trick productions, well and good, but do not write "stunt" plays for their machinery.

Put your drama into dialogue and in such order that it can be played on a bare platform without scenery and stand up alive on its own backbone.

A division into scenes and acts within two hours of acting time gives an occidental audience a rest during intermission.

The divisions are not arbitrary but represent a lapse of stage time or progress in the plot.

Every curtain that comes down is an important curtain. It does not just drift down anywhere. Its fall must have a dramatic significance.

The first curtain must have established the background of the play, whether comedy, tragedy, farce, fantasy, what not. It must have introduced the main characters to be involved in the plot. If each character has not appeared in person, some foreshadowing mention must have been made. The first seed of the action must have been planted, and many other little seeds of foreshadowing that later can spring up as flowers or weeds.

The next curtain must have advanced the action and have come down at a moment significant with suspense or twist of interest.

The next curtain must advance the action more and come down with increased interest or suspense.

And so on until the play having steadily crawled up a

ramp reaches the climax at the top.

The ramp should take about two thirds or three fourths of the acting time of the play.

After the climax curtain the plot untangles itself, or the action progresses to a conclusion which is the result of the climax. This end should be vital and not just a petering out, tired finish to a goal.

The finish need not be "happy" in the sense of forcing a sugared ending, but it should be satisfactory in the sense that it is a logical, plausible, final mosaic to make the complete pattern.

P

P stands for PAINT.

Have you forgotten to paint your pattern?

You may be lucky to find a producer with adequate resources for the purchase of elaborate scenery and colorful costumes and exquisite lights; so much the better. But do not shift the burden of your own responsibility.

If the play were to be played by amateurs in a small town on a bare platform, could the blind *bear* its color?

Have you wasted ink giving directions to actors and to stage designers how to bring out the subtleties of color in the painting quality of your dialogue instead of making that color your own embroidery?

Dialogue is your complete job.

If you are intrigued by stage construction you may be an excellent producer, or a scenic artist, but as a playwright you have one job, to write *dialogue*.

Through dialogue you paint, suggestively, the setting, the weather, the time, the day, the names of the characters, in fact, everything you need. You have no right to rely upon the printer's program. You have no right to rely on your audience reading your play before they come. If it is not clear when spoken from the stage, you alone are at fault for its lack of clarity.

Do not overpaint in feverish desire to be original or vigorous, but do your honest duty in representing the color of life.

Do not send out hasty dialogue. Do not use trite terms and trite quotations. Here and there the substitution of a colorful, expressive word will enhance the glamor and illusion.

In other words, don't be lazy. Work!

Q

Q stands for QUANTITY.

Have you enough material for a long play? Or would you improve it by reducing it into a one act play? Or have you in a one act play attempted action which requires more detailed development? Perhaps you have been trying to compress the plots for two plays into one.

Check up on quantity all the way through.

(Continued on page fifteen)

Strictly Teen

FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

by BARBARA PEIFFER

Clash-dadadi-dadadum—

As part of a Chinese Chorus in "The Stolen Prince" I recall my most humorous role in a play. With the aid of a comb and paper our chorus made "sweet music" for this production, which drew many a laugh from our small private audience. (They even served us tea during the production!)

That was only part of my four years in drama. Thinking back farther, days of frantic Freshman stage fright recall my role as the "Flag" in "Flag of the Free," a verse choir presentation. "And I the emblem of a freedom-loving people . . ." with knocking knees, an expression (I hope was calm) and a blue formal, I walked to the stage and began. Suddenly it was over—I walked out—my first role was finished.

During my Sophomore year, besides being part of the chorus in the above-mentioned Chinese play I was Bernadette's mother in "The Song of Bernadette," the Academy's spring play. No spring fever for me as we, diligently, paced out our roles on the stage. Finally when the curtain went up I found myself looking into the face of a larger audience than I, the inexperienced Sophomore, was used to; but then I began my first line, "Well Soubirous, it's about time you got home . . ." and I was Madame Soubirous.

Next fall I came back to the Academy as vice-president of our CTC organization and also a Junior beginning her third year in Drama.

I couldn't wait till "play time." For our one-act plays I was given another "mother part" only this time in the "Phantom Ship." Oh! how we worked. This time we were packing up our props for a trip to the Dyersville play festival. We didn't win, but the experience was unforgettable—even the bus ride past Iowa fields of corn to and from our destination.

We barely had the props of the "Phantom Ship" put away when try-outs for "Murder in a Nunnery" were posted on the bulletin board. I received the role of Turkey, one of the school girls, in the production. My girl friends and I had to climb up and down a camouflaged drain pipe to get in on the mystery of who was the murderer in the nunnery.

Now in my Senior year as president of the Academy's CTC I'm writing of my drama experiences, all of which helped me cultivate responsibility, promptness, confidence, courtesy, poise and last but not least—team work. These experiences I shall never forget, for aren't memories made of this?

OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO

**The Immaculate Players, Immaculate
Conception Academy, Dubuque, Iowa,
for this issue**

STAFF

EDITOR Barbara Peiffer
FEATURE EDITORS Rose Mary Lange; Pat Koenig
CROSS COUNTRY CIRCUIT Jo Ann Kretz
MODERATOR Sister Mary Generose, O.S.F.

World of Yesterday

by PAT KOENIG

The stage is entirely dark, no curtain covers its bleak emptiness. The lights of the theatre have faded and the audience sits in hushed expectancy, watching the black elevated platform and waiting for the talented magic of the theatre to transform this wooden island to a new and unseen world of painted fantasy and stark reality.

Slowly a faint light moves across the stage and spotlights a young girl standing before a varnished pulpit in the far corner. With one sigh the audience leans back to listen as she makes a simple explanation by way of introduction and the bold and brilliant panorama of folklore unfolds before delighted eyes. No colorful costumes, bits of scenery or intricate sound effects pamper the imagination. Only the paper-curtained background, occasionally illuminated by a single colored light, graceful gesturing movements of the players, blinding voices of the singers, and the pulsating rhythm of the music transports its waiting audience to the half-forgotten world of yesterday.

They sit in the green meadows of Merry Old England and listen to blended harmony in "Wildcombe Fair," clever reasoning in "The Riddle Song." Dancers whirl by to interpret the meaning of "Paper of Pans" and moods lighten to the swinging rounds of "The Hart He Loves the High Wood," "Absolam, My Son," and the comic "Let Simon's Beard Alone."

Silently they sit beside the campfire of a westward moving pioneer, stirred by the glowing sunset and the sweet sadness of "Shenandoah." They come to know the pioneer's good-natured hardiness as he teases with "The Burial of O'Flaherty" and "Sweet Betsy from Pike." They laugh and worry and love with a young man in a gold-rush boom-town

PLAY PRODUCTION WORKSHEET: *THE IVORY DOOR*

by A. A. MILNE

Cast: 15 male, 4 female, many or few extras. It is possible to change some male roles to female. The parts of the young princes in the prologue and in the final scene could easily be done by two small girls. It is possible to double roles.

Setting: One interior, 2 exteriors. The mummer's scene (Act II, Sc. I) can be done effectively on the apron of the stage, or on a set of risers out front (this eliminates one exterior). A unit set is effective. Time: "Once upon a time," medieval.

Costumes: Medieval—14th and 15th century: Men: tunics, tights, Women: flowing gowns, full rounded or pointed sleeves, coifs, a variety of headgear—pointed hats, peaked hats (with two gables) or crownlike brims with coifs. This period offers a variety of styles and cuts. The final scene calls for two 16th century costumes. Suggested reference: Millia Davenport *Book of Costume*, Volume I.

Production: To establish the many mood changes it is essential that the lighting move with the play and that the color media be chosen carefully, e.g. for fantasy effect delicate blues, lavender combined with flesh and surprise pink, for the court scenes warmer, more vivid colors.

Suggestions for background music: Jacques Ibert's *Elizabethan Suite* and parts of *Divertissement* (both come on one record, 33 1/3), and *Escales* (Ports of Call) also by Ibert (78).

The Play: *The Ivory Door* is a play in which the theme predominates: men prefer what everybody says, what always has been done to truth even when truth is unmistakable. For centuries (in an imaginary kingdom) a small ivory door in the King's throne room has been a symbol of the people's cherished superstition. At intervals in royal history a few courageous kings disappeared through the ivory door impatient to set aside legend for truth. Their presumed misadventures become part of the cherished legend that anyone who goes through the door falls into a bottomless pit and never returns. Actually each King did return, but the people preferred not to recognize him, they prefer to lose a king rather than the security of their legend.

Remarks: This play is not new, but its message is always contemporary. It offers a splendid intellectual and artistic challenge to cast and director. *The Ivory Door* calls for continual teamwork. The crowd is not a milling group of extras, it is essential that each individual be continually sensitive to the changing situation.

Publisher and Royalty: The play is published by Samuel French, Inc., New York, N.Y. Royalty is listed at \$50.00. It is possible to get a reduction.

—SISTER MARY SUSAN, S.S.N.D.

in an adaptation of Bret Harte's almost classical folk story *Prosper's Mother*.

Strangely they find themselves lifted by the religious spirituals of the enslaved Negro as he looks to Heaven for his only Emancipation in "Every Night When the Sun Goes In" and "Ezekial Saw the Wheel." They feel proud of the courageous missionaries who spread the Faith to find their reward in the simple belief of an "Indian Christmas Carol."

War thunders at their heels as softly, mournfully comes "Johnny Has Gone For a Soldier," but still they find America's ever-ready humor in the dance interpretation of "Soldier, Won't You Marry Me."

Peace returns and life goes on as they howl uproariously at the hollow, puffy courage in the "Keelboat Scene" from "Life on the Mississippi" and watch a wise young miss reject a would-be suitor in "O Madame, I Have Come a'Courtin'."

They almost stamp their hands as well as their feet to the rollicking strains of "Mr. Banjo" and the fast-moving

dance "Cindy." The thunderous strains of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" gives a flourishing finale as the audience blinks in the sudden flare of houselights, startled to find themselves in the Clarke College Theatre, Dubuque, Iowa.

Again the miracle of the theatre has woven its magic spell in the imagination of its viewers. But miracles never just happen. They are the crowning achievement of work and sweat and a little blood by the people behind the scenes as well as those who worked the magic on stage.

For Mr. George Herman, who wrote, directed, and staged the panorama; for the Clarkettes Glee Club, Cecilian Group, and other voice study groups of Clarke and Loras Colleges, for the dance interpreters, players, and even those of the faculty who took part, for the lighting, sound effects, and hundred and one unsung jobs, The American Folk Festival was truly a miracle. All their work and sweat and a little blood had blended together to form the half-forgotten world of yesterday.

On The Air

by ROSE MARY LANGE

The whistling wind, a delicate background of waltz music, the splash of rain against a sitting-room window!

For years now, almost every sound imaginable has gone through poor "Mike's" ears since the first day station CLRK became part of the Clarke college campus.

Every Saturday someone at this campus station switches on the master control that connects it with WDBQ, one of the local radio stations, and for 15 minutes the children of Dubuqueland can listen to one of their favorite fairy tales. There are stories all the way from, "Once upon a time . . ." in the life of *Cinderella*, to, ". . . so they lived happily ever after," for *Snow White and Rose Red*.

During his years in the second floor studio "Mike" has had his share of pretty Clarke girls whispering in his tubes but he has also enjoyed the fun and comedy that is connected with programs and rehearsals.

He has noticed how often the sound effects would come in at the wrong time during the first rehearsal, or Susie would laugh during a very dramatic scene with *Hansel and Gretel*.

But program time is always serious business, needing undivided attention. When "Mike" sees the director making like she's pulling taffy or stretching spaghetti he knows that she is trying to tell the draws on the air to slow down, because there is still plenty of time for the Prince to rescue Snow White from her coffin.

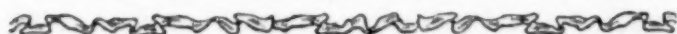
The girls themselves direct, write, and produce the program. A drama major is always the director, and she can choose any girls she wishes for the cast. The Radio Script classes prepare the 15 minute dialogue.

Clarke's station was purchased as a result of a \$10,000 gift to the college. The station is so well equipped that anyone who learns how to work its controls can go to any radio or television station and operate their controls without any further instructions.

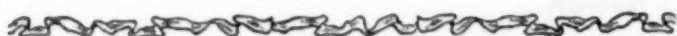
Besides make-believe for the kiddies "Mike" also has one day a week on which he can become domesticated. For every Wednesday afternoon the Home Economics department presents a program to the homemakers of the area.

Then, every afternoon for an hour "Mike" tunes in when Loras and Clarke colleges conduct a joint radio program just for the campus. Everything from original skits to "What's Your Department?" can be heard at this time.

So you see, there's never a dull moment for "Mike."



When ordering from our advertisers be sure to mention
National Catholic Theatre Conference.



Greek Tragedy for a Modern Audience

MEDEA AT WEBSTER COLLEGE

In an effort to bring a Greek play to the local stage, the students of the Webster College Drama Department, in co-operation with the Loretto Players, gave two performances of Euripides' *Medea* to capacity audiences in the college's auditorium in suburban St. Louis.

The Webster girls, under the direction of Mr. William F. Grisham, who heads the College's Drama Department, faced a task of considerable artistic scope: that of interpreting to a modern American audience the comparatively remote dramatic art of Ancient Greece.

To the average theatre-goer in our city, Greek tragedy is a lofty and exotic chapter in world literature, rarely considered in terms of the living theatre for which it is intended.

With our production of *Medea*, we wanted to call attention to this often neglected theatrical vitality of the plays which opened the long succession of stage "hits" in the Western Theatre.

The production followed the modern trend of staging Greek Drama by preserving the characteristic choral chants and dances, as well as the mask and robe of the Ancient Greek actors.

Webster students took major responsibilities in the presentation of *Medea*. The Senior Seminar Class of Dramatic Studies formed the production unit. Miss Carole Thomas, as assistant director, worked closely with Mr. Grisham, was entirely responsible for the action of the chorus; Miss Mary Alene McQuie became the production's designer, responsible for the set design, the masks and their construction; Miss Anne Chartrand played the leading role of *Medea*.

Webster actresses and St. Louis University actors who headed the cast list are as follows: Anne Chartrand, *Medea*; George Gitto, Jason; Ray Lonergan, Creon; Irving Vincent, Aegaeus; Anne Nowery, Nurse; Margaret Reilly, Attendant; Ronald Kempff, Messenger; Rosemary Pisani, Leader of Chorus.

The choreography for the dancing chorus was created by Mrs. Lisbeth Hoops, Director of Modern Dance at Webster College.

WEST CENTRAL REGION

To expedite the difficulties incurred in the transfer of regional offices, Father Johnston of St. Louis University, the retiring regional chairman, called a special meeting in St. Louis of all retiring and new regional officers. Though the distance to be traveled for one or two was considerable, it was well worth the inconvenience. Each new officer was briefed on her duties, given written helps, and could ask any questions or put forth any suggestions.

Father Johnston and the regional secretary, Miss Pat Bradley, had organized and listed all the old business that

(Continued on page sixteen)

WHEN THE TEACHER DIRECTS

(Continued from page eight)

how to give way for one another, or how to fill in after someone has vacated an important picture portion of the scene. The director should not fail to point out that an unbalanced picture often produces fine dramatic effects and is not contrary to good balance. He will show his actors where and when certain scenes or a part of a scene is to be dominated by a single character, and when the right of way is to be given to someone else. The "dirty tricks" of the trade (scene stealing and up-staging) will be decried loud and vociferously! To see that his actors keep in character and learn how to listen to other actors on stage will prove a definite challenge to the teacher-director. To teach them to remain in a state of repose and still remain a part of the scene will prove mastery of the craft he has undertaken.

After weeks of rehearsal, when lines have long since become dull and dreary, it will be the director who must teach the skill of making the audience see and hear the play as though it were happening for the first time. To produce freshness in stale bread calls for the miracle touch.

When one treads upon the ground of what is apparently successful acting and adversely criticizes new and modern techniques in the art, he is liable to have his critical ears boxed. No matter! The current drama teacher who insists on clean, clear diction and a grace and "nature intended" bearing will frequently have pointed out to him that the "best" actors now-a-days are perfectly "natural": they slur their lines; they slouch into seats and against props; they creep across the floor of a room; and they scratch themselves in public. And they are paid fabulous salaries because they are "so natural!" At this point one might quote what Maude Adams once said: "Much grace and beauty have gone from the theatre." This is a statement; it is no explanation, refutation, or solution. Perhaps the young critical actor under the guidance of a teacher-director can at least be taught to question: "Who's fooling whom?" The student should be taught that the stage is not real life and acting is not just "being natural." The young actor will have to be taught to perform toward the audience, not to the audience. He must be taught to convey his meaning and his character without communication. He will have to be shown that just as his makeup, the setting, the slight exaggeration of costume, the lighting, and the elevation of the stage are directed at enhancing and emphasizing nature, so too must his acting be. It is regrettable that Shakespeare's advice to the players is too seldom read and too often forgotten.

Teacher-Director Demands

The teacher-director is perhaps the one person in the educational system who is, of necessity, in a position to demand that the student train his voice to be everything that it should be and can be. He should give every possible help to his actors in discovering the possibilities of their own

voices. Students are frequently amazed and thrilled to find that they have not just one pitch of voice, but at least sixteen; and that they have not only a "loud" voice and a "soft" voice, but that there is a whole range of volume in between. A student will enjoy working with his voice when he discovers that there are a hundred or more sounds which he can produce, any one of which might be more interesting than the one which he uses constantly, much to the boredom and despair of those who have to listen. Constant urging in this matter of voice training is the duty of the teacher who directs.

The teacher-director will help his students to make other interesting observations concerning themselves. It will be pointed out that the two agents by which a human being expresses himself are the voice which we have already mentioned and the body. Hours can be spent showing the student that his spiritual faculties are what distinguish him from the animal kingdom. That the body is a secondary entity through which and by which our thoughts, ideas, inspirations, and attitudes are expressed. Hence, the body must be trained and cultivated to do just what we want it to do, and no more or less. Point out that strength of purpose and character can often be expressed by the stance of the feet. A devastating rebuke can be handed out by merely lifting an eyebrow. Disgust and contempt can be expressed by simply twitching the muscle at the corner of the nose. A whole world of interior confusion can be expressed by merely pressing the hands to the temples. A scene can be made or undone by the flip of a hand, or an audience can be made to laugh or cry when a lower lip is protruded and the chin is made to quiver. The teacher should make sure that his students realize the importance of a living voice in a body that is alive, and the still greater importance of the subjugation of both of these to the faculties of the soul.

The teacher-director must help his students to make something of a synthesis of life. He must teach them how to blend the things they see and hear into useful workable knowledge which serves them not only on the stage but off the stage as well. He will show them how necessary it is that they become interested in the speech and actions of other people. It would not be expecting too much of the truly interested student to expect him to carry a note book wherein he jots down wonderful bits of action which he has seen, character traits which he has observed, mannerism of the common and peculiar type, tricks and oddities of speech—all of those things which make life interesting and which prove that though God may have used a general pattern in making man, He definitely did not use a rubber stamp. The sincere student of drama will study human motives and will work hard to cultivate the characteristics of sympathy and understanding. He will be taught not to interpret everything which he experiences in the light of his own life, but will be shown that other people breed other men with different motives which change with age, race,

(Continued on page fifteen)

CHORAL SPEAKING

The fifteenth annual Choral Speaking Festival presented by the Speech Department of Mount Mary College was held on March 24, 1956. The morning session consisted of grades one to six. Each grade was required to give two set poems plus one or two of their own selections. According to the critic, Miss Therese Marie Cuny, Drama Director in Chicago Catholic High Schools, the morning participants seemed to put their whole-hearted interest into their renditions. Lively actions and facial expressions greatly illustrated their enjoyment in presenting these poems to the audience.

The afternoon session included junior high and high school students. The poems in this session were, of course, based on a higher level and were well-suited to the choral groups. The two poems required in the high school division were *The River*, by Charles Kingsley, and *The Judgment Day*, by James Weldon Johnson. Four high schools competed against each other, and every one of them gave excellent renditions of the above poems plus wonderful extra selections. St. Mary's Academy, of Prairie du Chien, was especially excellent. As a special selection, they recited excerpts from *The Bells*, by Edgar Allen Poe. Miss Cuny said that their rendition was positively magnificent, and that it was the best presentation of that particular poem she had ever heard. Her general comment was that the most desired choral group was one which consisted of both male and female voices, because it gives more volume and life to the selection. On a whole, the festival was enjoyed by all. Much knowledge was gained by the instructive and entertaining performances and, also, by the wise criticisms of the judge, Miss Cuny.

On March tenth of this year, thirty-five Mercian Players experienced one of the greatest thrills of our young lives. This thrill came in the form of a Theatre-Party to the Fred Miller Theatre in Milwaukee.

In 1954, the theatre was converted from a Motion Picture Theatre into the present theatre by Drama Incorporated, a group of Milwaukee citizens interested in promoting culture in the city. Besides being one of the few arena style theatres, it is one of the finest and best equipped in the country.

In the hour preceding the play, we were introduced to the intricacies of arena style production, by the Business Manager of the theatre. A guided and interesting tour of the backstage rooms followed. This included the Electrician's room, the dressing room, and the prop room.

After a group luncheon at a restaurant near the theatre we returned for the most important part of the excursion. Along with other Milwaukee theatre-goers, we were delighted by the play "Bernadine." Starring in this production was Vicki Cummings, supported by a group of professionals and a few local actors and actresses.

It was agreed that our excursion was more than an entertaining one. It was also educational. We found this venture especially interesting because it gave us firsthand observation of arena style production.

A Mary Productions Objective

MARY PRODUCTIONS is dedicated to the propagation of Marian Messages, truth and goodness in the field of communications such as radio, TV, stage, films and publications.

Mary Productions distributes original plays, produces plays and cooperates with similar groups for better entertainment programs.

Our "Marian Plays" have been sent and produced all over the world, including Africa, India, Australia, England, and the United States. We term Marian Plays, not only those about "Mary," but any play stressing the virtues she loves—purity, humility, charity, etc.; plays with wholesome humor, where virtues overcome vices, where there are the three elements of laughter, education, and inspiration which make for good wholesome entertainment; in other words, the audience ought to be made to laugh, learn, and be lifted spiritually.

We hope to carry on our endeavors in the commercial field as well as the religious field. There are many good programs but there is room for many more. We hope to supply some of them, thereby devoting all our time to our Marian endeavors.

We will be grateful for any advice, suggestions, cooperation to further our efforts in both fields.

We hope to help keep good programs in the field of communications . . . as there is a continual battle in the world between good and evil and we ought to do our share to help make the world better.

—Mary Productions, 100 Randolph Ave., Dumont 2, N. J.

IMMACULATA PLAYERS

by JO ANN KRETZ

Immaculate Conception Academy
Dubuque, Iowa.

"Monthly meetings are healthy!" Believing firmly in this statement the Immaculata Players hold regularly scheduled monthly meetings. Minutes are kept and the treasurer's report is given. The NCTC bulletin is read and discussed.

A grade is appointed to provide entertainment for each meeting. The purpose of the entertainment this year was to give different types of dramatic presentations. In January, the sophomores presented skits in arena styles; in February, the seniors produced a scene from an audience-participation play. The Freshmen verse choir gave various selections.

Handicapped by a very small stage and assembly, the Players have and will confine their activities to the production of one-act plays for private audiences during the last semester of this year.

A talent show is scheduled and as the final activity of the year the players participated in a co-operate communion and breakfast on the first Sunday in May.

WHEN THE TEACHER DIRECTS

(Continued from page thirteen)

nationality, religion, or the social level from which they come. He will learn the advantages of mixing with people of all classes of society, from all sections of the city, and even, by imaginations, other periods in history.

The teacher-director is in a wonderful position to urge his students to read and to study. He will point out the great scope of experiences and learning which must be part of the good actor. The good actor knows history; he knows something of philosophy and literature, and he is not unfamiliar with the sciences. The teacher-director and the young actor must mutually share the truth that "the only thing in life worth remembering is the poetry," that it is in the realm of aesthetics that man finds his most noble expression, and that it is in the creating of things good, and beautiful, and true that man draws closer to God.

There is still much to be said about methods of teaching, but that can be left for another time.

Right now it is important that when the teacher directs he realizes his importance as an artist and a teacher and a director. If he is convinced that the production of a play with its literary and artistic values, appreciation of drama, sympathetic understanding of character and character development, control of body, speech, and training of the imagination, memory, intellect and will is important to the intelligent curriculum; then, perhaps, it will not be long before others will help him in the advancement of this art.

ANOTHER ACTIVE GUILD

(Continued from page three)

After the play, a membership drive was ably conducted and culminated in the production of a Christmas play featuring the children of Theatre Guild members. The response to the idea of having the children act and of producing a play based on a religious theme was so favorable that again in 1955 a Christmas play with Children was again presented. Mr. Eugene Bergmann Directs the Theatre Guild productions and his wife directs the Children's shows.

The continued interest and enthusiasm of the charter members, plus the talent and experience of new members in the GUILD enabled the organization to next produce the mystery THE BAT. The next venture was to produce two plays on a seasonal basis for 1955-56, the first being HARVEY and the second, NIGHTMARE.

Membership in the Theatre Guild of St. Thomas More Parish is open to any interested member of the parish, to husbands or wives of parishioners and to Parents of children attending the St. Thomas More School.

THE ABC OF PLAYCRAFT

(Continued from page nine)

Is the first act too long? Could some of the material be shifted into the second act? Is the last act too short? Is the order of the acts divided into rather equal quantity? Have you proportion?

Is an unimportant scene longer than an important one? Has a minor character more dialogue than his significance in the play deserves? Are the vital points of the action glossed over or have you exhausted from the situation the very essence of its dramatic possibilities? Like squeezing juice from a lemon, squeeze out the utmost dramatic value from your main theme, but in your minor machination show economy and restraint.

If visualization helps you, reduce your play to lines something like the Government's weather map, representing the time consumed by each forward step of the plot. You may find that you have been standing still a very long time, with dialogue entertaining perhaps, but in quantity out of proportion to the whole.

This map can also indicate the emotional progress of your plot. If the quantity of emotion required in the first act exceeds the climax scene you are lost. If your plot is capable in the first act of great height, you must restrain it in order to save your highest dimension for your climax.

Scan the play for its relative values.

(To be continued.)

We have it!

COLOR SPRA

THE SENSATIONAL NEW TEMPORARY HAIR COLORING

\$2.00 + tax

Available in Aerosol Cans in 6 colors
(Black, Brown, Silver, Gold, Red, Golden Blonde)

Also Available in Glass Bottles—to be used with atomizer
(Light Silver, Steel Gray, Silver Bronze, Platinum Blonde,
Yellow Gold, Golden Red Blonde, Medium Red Bronze,
Deep Copper Red, Light Ash Brown)

and 4 new FANTASY Shades: (In Bottles)
Medium Blue, Pink Rose, Chartreuse and Lavender
Atomizer for Glass Bottles—75c each

Color Spra can be sprayed on, thus eliminating the need for a brush or sponge, and will change the color of any person's hair to the new shade. Thus to grey an actor's hair, all you need do is spray COLOR SPRA, and in less time than it takes to tell about it, you not only have a natural shade of grey hair, but the remarkable thing about this product is that it will not rub off. Color Spra is easily removed by shampooing. Now you can change an actor's hair to any color you want, easily, effectively and temporarily.

FOR ALL THEATRICAL EQUIPMENT ORDER FROM

**PARAMOUNT
COSMETICS & THEATRICAL MAKE-UP**

242 W. TWENTY-SEVENTH STREET, NEW YORK 1, N. Y.

What They're Reading . . .

ON STAGE, EVERYONE

by GRACE BARNES and
MARY JEAN SUTCLIFFE

The Macmillan Co., N. Y.—\$3.20

Here is the book which has all the answers to the question: "What constitutes a meaningful action program in dramatics?" From your students, **ON STAGE, EVERYONE**, will elicit an enthusiastic response when you teach the lessons of the stage. For you, the director, it is an invaluable guide, full of practical and stimulating suggestions in planning your course of study for all your drama classes.

The authors, Grace Barnes and Mary Jean Sutcliffe, come well equipped to the task of writing this book. As supervisors of student teachers from the University of California, Los Angeles, preparing to be teachers of oral English and dramatics, they have had ample opportunity to see how teachers with little or no experience respond to various teaching materials and use them in actual teaching situations. So they have presented this book as your partner for teaching a successful dramatics program. The built-in lesson plans are an important feature of this book. The busy teacher can follow the plan just as it has been carefully set up and thus save time for actual teaching.

A variety of roles for the students to play is an important tool for a successful action program. Included right in the text are twenty-three scenes and a complete one-act play. Students have the opportunity to play every type of role, from Lady Teazle to Hamlet, using material in their text. There is also a helpful list of supplementary acting material, too. There are lists of scenes for class work, one-act plays, three-act plays and books on all phases of the theatre and allied arts.

There are additional extra special teaching aids for effecting this practical action program; A Dictionary of Theatre Vocabulary; Three-Act Play Production Outline; photographs, diagrams, and "call board" chapter previews.

ON STAGE, EVERYONE is every teacher's guide to helping every student star in his daily social relations as well as in his classes. The teacher will star with the students through this dynamic, interest-filled program!

—SR. M. ANACLETE, O.P.

WEST CENTRAL REGION

(Continued from page twelve)

had to be carried over into the new term. In addition, helps were suggested for new business, especially the Regional Convention, which will be held in Kansas City in 1957.

Since a new regional office was created at the Regional Convention held in Omaha in March, namely, College Activity Coordinator, this special meeting afforded a wonderful

opportunity to settle how that office would function, its main objective and goals.

The social aspect was not neglected either, for luncheon was served there in the St. Louis Speech Department where the meeting was held. Needless to say, a delightful "chat fest" ran simultaneously.

All told, the meeting was a wonderful success and appreciated by everyone concerned. All agreed that there could have been nothing better to give greater unity and stability to our region.

COLLEGIATE FRATERNITY

(Continued from page two)

CONCLUSION IV—Written Communication

That the efforts of all the individual drama groups be consolidated through written communication, especially through *Catholic Theatre*, the national publication of N.C.T.C., as the links of a chain unifying the various groups.

CONCLUSION V—National Drama Fraternity

That, finally, and most important, a National Catholic Fraternity be established under the direction of the N.C.T.C. The function of this fraternity would be to set standards for all phases of college drama activity. Acceptance into the fraternity would indicate recognition of the achievement of these standards. Such a fraternity would be also to contribute to the growth of unified effort and professional ideals so necessary in Catholic Community Theatre development.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

By way of immediate action regarding the fraternity, Dr. Earl C. Bach, of Loretto Heights College, Denver, National Board member in charge of college activities, (whose article on a Drama Fraternity appeared in the December, 1955, issue of *Catholic Theatre*), has set up a committee of faculty directors to study and plan the framework of such a fraternity. This committee will report its recommendations to the National Board when it meets in Chicago in June. Following the approval of the board, the colleges which were represented at the Omaha meeting hope to convene in Chicago to further discuss, from a student point of view, the organization of the fraternity.

It is finally hoped that charter membership in the planned fraternity may be established and formally initiated at the Central Convention to be held at St. Mary College, Milwaukee, in October. It is also hoped that the fraternity, once established in the Mid-West, may be presented as a working reality to the entire N.C.T.C. membership at the National Convention in June, 1957, and thereby gain nation-wide interest and support.

